

REMARKS

In the outstanding official action, claims 1-4 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being fully anticipated by Berge et al, with dependent claim 5 being rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berge in view of Nagaoka et al, all for the reasons of record.

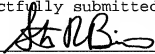
In response, independent claims 1 and 3 are herewith amended in order to more particularly and precisely define the novel and unobvious features of the instant invention, and it is respectfully submitted that these claims, as herewith amended, and the remaining claims depending therefrom, are now clearly patentably distinguishable over the cited and applied references for the reasons detailed below.

More particularly, it was suggested in the Action that Berge shows, in part, flat portion 12 at 15 in Fig. 1 showing a part of the transparent end portion defining the shape of a part of the interface between 11 and 13, which contacts 12 at 15 at a predefined voltage. However, it is noted that the interface between 11 and 13 which contacts contact region 15 makes contact only at two discrete points, at or adjacent the end portions of the region 15. In the instant invention, on the contrary, a part (4') of the transparent end portion 4 is in direct contact with and defines the shape of a central portion of the interface 14 at a predefined voltage.

In order to more clearly and precisely distinguish the instant invention, independent claims 1 and 3 have been amended to more specifically recite that a part of the transparent end portion is in direct contact with and defines the shape of a central portion of the interface at a predetermined voltage. This recitation is clearly patentably distinguishable over the structure of the reference (compare, for example, Fig. 2(a) of the instant application with cited Fig. 1 of the reference) wherein the reference shows that the corresponding end portion is in contact with the interface only at two discrete points (as opposed to a portion of the interface) and that this contact occurs at or near the ends of the contact region rather than at a central portion thereof.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that independent claims 1 and 3, as herewith amended, now define an invention which is clearly patentably distinguishable over the cited and applied art. Accordingly, it is respectfully submitted that claims 1 and 3, and the remaining claims depending therefrom, are now in condition for allowance, and favorable consideration is earnestly solicited.

Respectfully submitted,

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